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CIA/OSR /TF 750409 GREEK FORCES IN AEGEAN  
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01 OF 01

9 April 1975

MEMORANDUM

Greek Forces in the Aegean

Greek army forces in the Aegean are concentrated on the six major islands of Limnos, Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Kos and Rhodes, with smaller units deployed for surveillance purposes on several of the less important islands as well.

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The information currently available indicates that the Greeks began reinforcement of the islands during last spring's Aegean crisis, but that most of the reinforcement has occurred since the Cyprus crisis of July and August. The most significant aspects of this build-up have been:

- In September 1974 the Greeks planned to deploy two infantry battalions to each of the six major islands. It is not known whether this deployment actually took place at that time.
- The Greeks planned to deploy sixty light tanks to the islands in late 1974-early 1975. Their arrival has not yet been confirmed.
- Five platoons of medium tanks were designated in early 1974 to be moved to the islands if danger of hostilities grew, one platoon to each major island except Limnos. These deployments were probably accomplished in late 1974 but have not yet been confirmed.

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- Ten infantry battalions were deployed to the islands in February 1975, together with twenty-six pieces of artillery. It is, however, possible that some of the battalions which were supposed to have been sent in September were not actually sent until February.
- A total of 500 Raiding Forces personnel were reportedly deployed to Limnos, Lesbos and Samos in March 1975.
- Five fighter aircraft were deployed to Limnos in March 1975, the only combat aircraft currently on the islands. Rhodes, Samos, Lesbos and Kos also have airfields capable of handling military aircraft, although none are presently located there.

Information on the personnel and equipment strengths of units on the islands is extremely limited. This is particularly true for those units which were on the islands prior to the recent buildup, since many of them are configured specifically for use there and thus differ from units stationed on the mainland in their organization and equipment. It is also not always clear from some reports whether units designated for defense of the islands were actually there at the time of the report or were merely planned for deployment to the islands at some later time.

It should also be noted that the islands also contain National Guard and Gendarmerie forces--generally averaging a reinforced battalion--which would play an important part in their defense. For the purposes of this memorandum, however, only regular active duty Greek military personnel are counted.

There is little doubt that Greek military forces are present on the islands of the eastern Aegean and the thrust of the reporting indicates that a relatively large buildup of these forces has been going on since last fall and that the buildup is continuing. The following island-by-island roundup necessarily involves rough estimates, but they accurately portray the magnitude of the changes which have taken place.

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Limnos. The number of military personnel is estimated to be 3000-4000. This reflects an estimated increase of 2000-3000 men since last summer. Most of this increase is accounted for by the introduction of 3-5 infantry battalions. In addition artillery and Raiding Forces have also been introduced, as well as five fighter aircraft.

Lesbos. The number of military personnel is estimated to be 4000-5000. This reflects an estimated increase of 3000-4000 men since last summer. Most of this increase is accounted for by the introduction of 3-5 infantry battalions, a field artillery battalion, Raiding Forces personnel and probably armored units.

Khios. The number of military personnel is estimated to be 2000-3000. This reflects an estimated increase of 1000-2000 men since last summer. Most of this increase is accounted for by the introduction of 1-3 infantry battalions, as well as artillery, engineer and probably armored units.

Samos. The number of military personnel is estimated to be 2000-3000. This reflects an estimated increase of 1000-2000 men since last summer. Most of this increase is accounted for by the introduction of 1-3 infantry battalions, as well as artillery, Raiding Force and probably armored units.

Kos. The number of military personnel is estimated to be 1500-2600. This reflects an estimated increase of 1000-2000 men since last summer. Most of this increase is accounted for by the introduction of 1-3 infantry battalions, as well as artillery and probably armored units.

Rhodes. The number of military personnel is estimated to be 3000-4000. This reflects an estimated increase of 1600-2700 men since last summer. Most of this increase is accounted for by the introduction of 2-4 infantry battalions, as well as smaller artillery, engineer and probably armor units.

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